832 days and the establishment of a sacred place, on which the Fang even set up a female figure of clay. During the seven days of preparation, the necessary medicines are obtained.

[824] These are bark, scraped off the Anonacea Monodora tenuifolia
[825] Bth. (fǒb IV) and the Olacacea avǒm, and a small elephant's tooth, into which are put the following /159/ things.

[826] 1. The most important is the larynx (engǒ̄ŋ) of a famous singer, especially of one who was versed in love songs, or the larynx of a woman who before the payment of the bride price allowed herself to be abducted by her lover. The aim is to obtain the power of the singer, who was loved on account of his voice (famous tenors even in other countries are, after all, not only popular but also loved), and to be loved as he was, or one desires to have the woman consent (with her larynx = voice) to follow the call of love as quickly as did the woman whose larynx has been placed inside the elephant's tooth. The name engǒ̄ŋeshǒk was chosen because of the desire to pretend that only the throat of an elephant (shǒk) was involved and to avoid naming the real contents, the human throat. As a name for the whole thing, engǒ̄ŋeshǒk is intended to veil the meaning of the feast just as the animal names conceal the purpose of the cults. In other words, whatever you do, don't call a spade a spade.

2. Sex organs of a mother-in-law, the one who has given birth to the daughter and loved one.

[826] 3. The bones of an albino (mvēl-mōt), preferred by women because of the skin color (1).

[114] 1. Opinions concerning an albino vary a great deal; in other areas an albino is less highly regarded (Jaunde).

4. The bones of twins, because of the desire to be united with the loved one just as twins are united in the mother's womb.

[821] 5. Fulgurites (abī-zĭ'ĭŋ), so the love will be as powerful as the lightning that throws down the tallest trees.

6. nǔ̄, so that the sorcerous beings (= evil persons) will not

[1] [or possibly "tusk"; see figure 55, page 26.--Analyst]

737 den deutschen Schutzgebieten /Reports by Explorers and Scholars from the German Protectorates/, edited by Dr. Baron Von Danckelmann.

this spider oracle: "In each hamlet or along the way one finds a quadrangle surrounded by the trunks of plantain trees, in the center of which there is a hole with little bamboo sticks (2) set around

2. This should read: raffia!

it. In this hole lives the field spider. Now, if the owner of the hamlet or one of his relatives wishes to undertake a journey, the hole is covered with plantain leaves during the night. If the little sticks remain undisturbed, everything will go well; on the other hand, if a little stick has been moved out of place, a misfortune threatens, and the people concerned stay at home."

2. Meteorology

§21 The rain is up in the sky in a large vessel which holds the rain just as a piece of fruit holds its juice. When it is completely full, the vessel bursts, and the water gradually flows off and falls to earth. When the vessel is completely empty, the people say: "The rainy season is over." During the subsequent dry season, the vessel gradually fills up again, with perhaps some water seeping through once in a while, but the greater part stays in. Then the vessel bursts again when the new rainy season begins.

When the vessel bursts and the water streams out, there is a tumult and a roar as of a waterfall or the surf. It can be heard in the distant rumble of thunder during a storm, which in the tropics coincides with rain more frequently than among us. Hence the Pangwe call this rumbling of the thunder ndjaŋ mvɔ̀ɔ̀ l, "the rushing (noise) of the rain" (3). Rain is a creation of the primeval

3. mvɔ̀ɔ̀ a dim means: it is thundering.

●821 there is a thunderstorm; actually, "the rain is roaring."

mother, and, as a sign of a certain season, it is dependent upon the moon which, like all other celestial bodies, was assigned its course by the same primeval force. /197/

821 775 As we saw in the creation stories /Ed., not translated/, lightning also existed from the beginning (in the egg!). Later, however, the souls subdued lightning, and they now use it for two different purposes. The first is to warn their descendants on earth of a threatening storm, that is, sheet lightning and atmospheric lightning (fɔ̌'levɔ̌s IV Fang or fɔ̌'levɔ̌s IV Ntum). "There is lightning" is then expressed by fɔ̌'levɔ̌s a yɔ̌́ or fɔ̌'levɔ̌s a lɨ̌d, "the atmospheric lightning lights up," or "it passes by"; the root yɔ̌s means "to open suddenly with a bang, to light up, to appear suddenly and disappear again." Secondly, the souls use lightning to strike down large trees that bar their view of the earth and the activities of human beings -- that is, lightning that strikes, zɨ́ɨ́ IV Ntum, zɨ́'ɨ́ɨ́n IV Fang, or zɨ́'yɨ́n IV. The fɔ̌levɔ̌s is thought of as like the igniting of powder when it lights up briefly and suddenly; the zɨ́ɨ́ is like the firing of a rifle, and just as in the case of the latter, one says: ngɨ́ a kɔ̌́bo, "the rifle is talking," so in the case of the former, one says: zɨ́'yɨ́n a kɔ̌́bo, "the lightning rifle is speaking," that is, "it is thundering" (the cracking thunder accompanying lightning, in contrast to the distant rolling thunder of which we spoke above).

[818] [819] Lightning that strikes is conceived as a black bullet that strikes the trees and splinters them. The "turd of the lightning" (abɨ̄' zɨ́'yɨ́n) -- this presumably refers to molten and conglomerated masses of *pesin* -- is believed by the natives to have curative powers, as does the bark of trees struck by lightning.

Although the "lightning cartridge" is intended solely for purposes of blasting, it can also be dangerous for human beings if they happen to be in the neighborhood of the trees affected, and it is believed that death is caused by the tremendous roar. Hence it is advisable to withdraw into the house during thunder storms, because, by strict command of the souls, lightning is not allowed

821 to penetrate into houses. To be sure, this lightning is a disobedi-
775 ent fellow who has already caused his primeval mother Alonkok a great many difficulties, and he does not always heed the command of the souls. If it should happen at any time that in his willfulness he strikes the houses -- incidentally, I never heard of such a thing happening -- the natives do not assume that there was malice on the part of the souls. Possibly, as is only human, they aimed wrong. For this reason the Pangwe, who like all primitive people are quite apprehensive in other respects, are not afraid of thunder
[152] storms. A momentary fright, however, caused by the brightness of the lightning and the violence of the thunder, can very often be observed in the case of nervous temperaments.

There is only one more question: "Why is it that the souls make use of their 'lightning rifles' only when it rains; they could surely strike down the trees just as well without it?" To this my Pangwe has a ready answer: "It doesn't work so well, because rain and storms make a passage through the air for the lightning bolt, and then the souls have an easier time of it." /198/

Rain medicines are infrequent in the Pangwe region; rain does
789 not need to be summoned for there is enough of it -- God knows --
821 in tropical West Africa. They would sooner fend it off, for instance, during the drying of ngon, at cult festivals, sometimes during the harvest, and on journeys. For this reason, unnecessary beating of drums is avoided because it invites rain, in accordance with the view, which, incidentally, also prevails outside the Pangwe region, that (rumbling) thunder is produced by rain.

During the drying of ngon, women sometimes place an inverted pot covered with leaves on the village square. Next to it they plant a little stick with a plantain dyed red speared on it,
[829] and they perhaps plant a twig of Petersia minor Niedenzu (abín) near it. The pot is supposed to represent the vessel in the sky in which the rain is enclosed (mvɛ́, "pot," mvɔ́-n̄, "rain"). Covering the pot indicates that they wish to have the heavenly pot closed in the same manner. The plantain is a plant of the moon which determines the seasons and thus also the rain, and the red coloration is, as it were, a courtesy paid to the moon. I was unable to discover the relationship of the Petersia to rain, but in the

789 opinion of one Fang, the word a bíñǎn, which is contained in the
821 name abíñ, has the sense of "moving about and rumbling," and they want the stormy weather just to move about and rumble.

The help of the ancestors is employed in another method of
769 combatting Jupiter Pluvius, one that is used chiefly for cult festivi-
789 ties. The ancestral figures, festively smeared with oil and red
821 wood, are placed in front of the house where they would be drenched "to the skin" if they did not see to it that no rain fell on this particular day. At the same time the ancestral skulls are frequently painted with a salve made of red wood and ground bark of
824 Pentaclethra macrophylla, whose pods, when they are ripe, burst open with a pop and fling the fruit a great distance; in this way the natives indicate that the rain should be flung to one side in the same fashion.

When women are in the fields harvesting -- especially at the
789 harvest of ngon -- and rain threatens, they put a little water and a
821 stone in a leaf bundle and hang this up in the field. In the same manner the rain is supposed to remain suspended in the sky, be as heavy as the stone, and stay in its place just like a Negro whose "heart is heavy" and who shows no inclination for any kind of undertaking.

Medicines with a similar effect are used on journeys. A leaf
484 of Trachyphrynium violaceum Radl. (tsǎdzkíi, IV Fang) is twisted
789 into a bag, filled with a little water, and then fastened to one
824 finger. By doing this, the rain is held fast. Another medicine consists of hanging up old pieces of wood saturated with water, so that the rain will likewise be absorbed up in the sky. Furthermore, a person will take a Petersia twig or a fern leaf dipped in water in his hand, /199/ so that the rain will be broken up into as many little parts as the small pinnules of the fern. Finally, there is the familiar Selaginella, the herb of "missing" (zǐ)ǎnǎ, from á zǐǎn, "to miss"), that is to say, the rain is supposed to miss man.

It should be emphasized that the Pangwe no longer regard
789 these medicines seriously and even ridicule them as "superstition":
178 they have long since noticed that none of them helps. Hence, medicines against rain are no longer used today, except as a joke. A possible exception may be the cooking pot medicine of the women,

789 but even that seems to be dying out for its meaning is frequently
178 no longer understood. Thus I once (on an earlier occasion) found an open cooking pot set up as rain medicine; I simply could not understand this until I saw the authentic medicine and was informed that in the first case a mistake had been made.

821 According to one conception, the rainbow is the handiwork of a great sorcerer who wanted to show the others what he was capable of performing. Other natives think the rainbow is water vapor or smoke, and when it appears in the east, late in the afternoon, people say jokingly that one end is standing in the Campo and the other end in the Uelle. A third notion concerning the rainbow -- and this one is probably based on its iridescent colors -- is that it represents a water snake. The word for rainbow is, accordingly, nyŭ-ŭ III, from nyŏ, "water snake." In addition, there is ntŭkŭm I, derived from the onomatopoetic expression tŭmetŭmetŭm, a designation for a flickering in front of the eyes.

The Tale concerning the Origin of the Rainbow

821 Once upon a time the grandmother of Ekute Essamnisŭmahŏge
539 said to her grandson: "Go and show me the place where your mother
773 always catches fish." Thereupon Ekute went along with her and showed her a good place along the river, but his grandmother said: "No, this was not the place." Then her grandson showed her another place, but here, too, the grandmother said: "This is not the place where I am going to fish." They went together this way to four other places, but at none did the grandmother want to fish. Finally, the grandson said: "There are no more places for fishing; after this there is only the large river left." The grandmother replied: "All right, that is where we shall go." But her grandson said: "Oh, the places where everybody fishes are here, but in the big river the fishing is poor." However, the grandmother answered: "But I want to take a look at the place; come along, we shall leave right away." Thereupon the grandson went along with her, and when they came to the spot where the river widened, the grandmother said: "Here is where I want to fish." The grandson

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again advised her against this, but the grandmother refused to give in, went into the water, and tried to drive the water away (1),

1. In smaller watercourses the water is removed by splashing it away; in larger rivers this is, of course impossible.

but in doing so she got in deeper and /200/ deeper until she was up to her neck in the water. Then she said to Ekute: "Bring me two sticks and lay them in the water so that I can stand on them." This Ekute did, and the grandmother removed the water and fished, and lo and behold, she soon had ten baskets full of fish. Then her grandson said: "Come, we have enough now, let's go home." But the grandmother said: "No, first I want to get all the fish out of the water; then I will surpass all people in fishing." Thus, she went on fishing, but then, all of a sudden, the water rose up to her neck and over her mouth, and finally she disappeared under the water. At that moment there arose out of the water a great snake (1), and when Ekute saw it, he seized his

1. In other words, the grandmother was a sorceress.

spear to kill it. Then the snake said: "Wait! I have something to say to you." Ekute, however, ran away into the village and called all the people, above all his father whom he already met on the way; the latter took spears and went with him to the river. When he saw the snake, he wanted to kill it with his spear. But the snake said: "Wait a moment, I have something to say." Then the snake commanded the people to make a basket and to carry it /the snake/ into the village. This was done, and when the snake had been brought into the village and had been assigned a house to sleep in, it said: "No, I want to sleep in the first house next to the meeting house." The people complied with this wish. Soon the rumor spread everywhere that a great snake was to be seen in the village, and many, many people came to see it. Everybody had to pay a lot of money for this, about as much as ten marks.

821 773 539 Thus Essamnišmaböge became very wealthy, and from this money alone he was able to purchase two wives.

Now it happened that he and all the people were gone one day, and only his son, Ekute, stayed behind. Then several people from a distant village appeared, but they had brought with them only two choppers (2), and in exchange for these they demanded

2. Bush knives valued at two marks.

to see the snake. Ekute, however, did not want to show it to them. The people argued with him and threatened, and they demanded to see the snake. Then Ekute, who was very imprudent, angrily took a chopper and knocked in the top of the house wall instead of carefully opening the door somewhat and letting the people look in. Thereupon the snake came out, went to the village square, and cried "See, now I am leaving." But the people and Ekute had run off. Thereupon the snake raised its head and body and swung itself into the air. At this very moment Ekute's father came back and was just able to cut off the lower end of the snake; the other part of the snake was already high up in the air and still stands in the sky today as the rainbow. The tail, however, turned into the python, and from the eggs there crept forth all the other little snakes. /201/

821 749 [754] The storm is likewise represented as the handiwork of an evil sorcerer. Whenever a great sorcerer is dying, he unleashes a storm, lays low the plantain fields of those people toward whom he feels ill will, destroys their houses, and indeed, he goes so far as to knock down their children in order to injure them. Anyone who has experienced a tropical tornado will understand the notion of the Pangwe that sorcerous beings are at work. The natives also have medicines against storms; the storm is gradually weakened if [824] one places young macabo leaves (these are weak to begin with) on the fire (whereby they become still weaker) and then grinds them to a powder on the ground in front of the house (this makes them weakest of all). Conversely, the storm is "made heavy" and thereby held back in the sky by placing a stone on Paspalum grass (obôt), which, because of its toughness and strength, is supposed

789 to represent the storm. Thus the storm is pressed onto the ground,
821 as it were. If the storm is already approaching, they beat a
plantain stalk to tatters on the ground of the village square, and as they do so, they exclaim:

[539] okŭ[ŭ] a lŭde ma a lŭd: Okă[k] nkĭă'
Storm, it pass by me, by (pass), (to) Okak in the west.

3. Astronomy

821 Even for a primitive people the astronomical knowledge of
772 the Pangwe is very limited. This fact can be excused only in part by the unfavorable conditions of their country (rainy forest region).

The Pangwe have the same conception of the earth as that of the "ancients," that is to say, they think of it as flat like a plate and surrounded on all sides by the ocean. Over the earth and the ocean arches the sky which, as is stated in the creation story, originated as a part of the earth that was blasted off and raised up on high. In other words, the sky is thought of as firm and finitely bounded, just as is the earth. One should, accordingly, imagine a large bell jar placed over a gigantic plate in the center of which the earth floats in water, and this gives one the conception held by the Pangwe. As regards the earth, they naturally think only of Africa, that is, they conceive of it as one single continuous land mass.

The sky is infinitely high; the tallest mountains known to the Pangwe do not extend into it. One would have to set about 200 or more silk-cotton trees (Ceiba, on the average 70 meters tall) end on end in order to touch the sky.

821 The material of the sky is similar to that of the earth, and,
[823] like it, it is harder and firmer on the inside and softer, more fluid on the outside -- a train of thought engendered by the swamps and the softened loam soil. Just as the crust of the earth forms clods, so the outer surface of the sky forms "scales" (ebŭ[s] e dzŏb "scales of the sky," that is to say, clouds). The clouds, however, are

821 subject to constant alteration, and this is explained /202/ in the following way. The masses of the sky's crust move against each other in a manner similar to iron or brass that has been liquified in forging and moves more or less viscously as it cools down, so that in the case of the first metal that flows out, its more rapid cooling impedes the movement, while the subsequent metal, flowing over the first, moves more quickly the nearer to the surface it is. This is why the clouds move at different speeds and in various layers relative to each other.

The moon and the sun pass across the vault of the sky exactly as the primeval force has ordained in eternal laws. During the day the sun moves under the vault from east to west, and during the night it moves back the same way over the vault where it is, of course, invisible. At night, the moon follows the course of the sun under the vault, and during the day it returns over the vault, but closer to the ceiling, so that during the day one can frequently see it shimmering through. The Pangwe very easily account for the phases of the moon. They assume that in its various phases the moon moves in one of the inner layers whose clods have already become more rigid and that it remains covered by one of these clods.

821 805 In our account of the religion of the Pangwe /Ed., not translated/, we have already discussed the significance of the moon in the cults. Here we need to consider only the practical side of its relation to human activities. The moon is the lord of fertility and of the seasons; the days and months are reckoned by it. The first day (according to other informants, the first two days) when the new moon appears is called avǒ? ngə̌n, that is, cold moon. From this day on all impulses toward propagation are "put in cold storage" for seven days, all development and all fertility are interrupted, the women have their menstrual flow, and the men abstain from sexual intercourse. For this reason, nothing else is undertaken, not because a taboo exists, but because one would not have any luck. The man does not go out to clear his farm because he would cut his finger; the woman does not go out to plant because the plants would not flourish. Even hunting and fishing are not attempted. It is important to note that this day is by no means designated as "bad," but as a day of rest which might correspond to

821 our Sunday, as if all nature had to take a rest.
805 By way of contrast, the days around the full moon are no good for hunting, probably because the moon when it is full is especially "evil" and hateful to all those who are sinless -- as are animals, for instance. Even the festivals of the moon cult (Sao) are never celebrated at the full moon, but always towards the time of the new moon in order not to display evil in its most glaring form. The natives count nine "days of the full moon," the sacred number which we have already encountered in the cults /203/, and during this time the Pangwe speaks of the ndzīibe ngɔ̄n, that is, the closed (full) moon, or ndzīige ngɔ̄n or abɨm e ngɔ̄n, that is, the used moon. On these days the people do work, but fishing, trapping, and hunting drives are not practiced. Among the Fang, a direct taboo (ekī) exists for these three activities, though it is true that they like to circumvent this taboo -- like many others -- with the help of medicines.

Rules are made to be circumvented, the Ntum in Bebai thought, [789] and during the days of the full moon they very gaily held great hunting drives. They also made a medicine by cutting a circle -- the full moon -- into the bark of a tree and within the circle removing half of the bark. In this way it became a half moon (Fig. 64). This medicine is delightfully naïve and beautifully indicates how the Negro knows how to help himself in all situations.

821 Concerning the nature of the stars the "Pangwe scholars" are not yet quite agreed. Some believe the stars are simply holes in the vault of the sky through which the sun can be seen at night as it moves over the arch. Others say that they are little fires which during the day are simply outshone by the brightness of the sun. Still others -- and these are probably in the majority -- assume that the stars are little celestial bodies like the sun and the moon, but that they are afraid of the sun, so during the day they withdraw into the interior of the vault, and during the night, fleeing from the sun as it moves across the top of the arch, they come out and then become visible, hence their name o-tɨ́-tɛ̄-ī, from the root a tɛ̄, = to move from one's place (1). If one of the stars has ventured too

1. oa tɛ̄ odĕn = when did you leave (travel from) home?

[321] far from its hole, it naturally falls down. We call that a shooting star; the Negro says: "otɔ̄ɔ̄, a ke a bɔ̄m (the star goes forth to get a bride)."

It is a cause for some surprise that many, even older people have not yet noticed that the stars apparently move from east to west. When I made such a statement, it was steadfastly contested, and when I offered proof, the phenomenon was new and striking to all.

Constellations or names of stars, it seems, are totally unknown to the Pangwe; if there have been reports about these from the [181] Jaunde, they are borrowed plumage with which the easygoing little Jaunde people have once more adorned themselves. The Pangwe calls comets bɔtɔ̄ɔ̄le from tɔ̄ɔ̄o III, and he sees monitor lizards in them. A quite subordinate group of stars in the vicinity of Orion was pointed out to me several times and designated as tɔ̄ɔ̄o, but I consider this a mistake, since in 1902 a comet disappeared in the vicinity of this area.

Extremely eager students may like to know the Pangwe's idea of the size of the heavenly bodies. Well, I hope their expectations are not too great! -- "Sun and moon," said my Pangwe, whom I /204/ /Fig. 64 appears here in the original text/ asked in the presence of his comrades, "are of the same size, and about -- let us say -- as large as one of the large tin plates sold on the coast." At this answer by the aspiring scholar, there was, however, a general shaking of heads, and in reply to my objection that even people in the distance look as small as ants and that the sky is so infinitely much farther away, the native questioned had to admit that he had underestimated. They finally agreed that the sun is as large as the area in front of my station (about ten meters wide). With that I had to content myself. In the case of the stars they obliged me from the outset, after this experience, by stating that they are as large as the space enclosed by the extended thumbs and index fingers of both hands, but the narrator evidently felt the need to justify his exaggeration to himself, and went on to remark: "They seem smaller, because they are far away!" /205/

As regards the color of the stars, the sun according to my Pangwe is red and hot like fire, the moon and the stars are white

2: Tessmann--87 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 F119 Fang F119

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[224]

Fig. 64. Medicine on trees, so that a hunting drive may be undertaken during the full moon, something which is actually prohibited. Bébai (Esseng Family), South Cameroons.

and cold. "If the moon is cold and has no light of its own, how is it that you can see it? After all, you cannot see people dressed in white either when everything is dark!" This objection the Pangwe counter with the reply: "On earth it is dark, but in the sky it is bright, that is, nothing obscures the view there!"

524 153 [825] [821] As we know, the Sso antelope is the animal of the moon, while the moon is mistress of the seasons and thus of rain; if one blows on the horn, the rain, which according to the Pangwe produces thunder, will answer.

Once the twelfth group of sentences is finished, all previously 524 recited groups of sentences must be recited backwards.

153 539 Sentence 1: nʉ̄m okbʉ̆n̄ a ke a
Man of the dwarf antelope, he goes to

dʒʉ̆ŋgan a nkʉ̄ k] etĕ
fall in love in the lying trunk inside,

b(a) asʉ̆ngʉ̄n-ogbwō .
with Asangon-Ogbwo.

The dwarf antelope man goes inside the prone tree trunk (which is hollow, so that the little antelope can use it as a hiding place) to fall in love with Asangon-Ogbuo, literally, the eldest daughter of the magician.

Sentence 2:

ngbʉ̄ʉ̄ne ogbʉ̆n̄ a ke a
Offspring of dwarf antelope, it goes to

bʉ̆ nʉ̆m okbʉ̆n̄.
follow man antelope. /308/

Sentence 3:

ngʉ̄-ogbʉ̆n̄ a ke a
Wife of dwarf antelope, she goes to

be ngbʉ̄ʉ̄ne ogbʉ̆n̄.
follow (the) little antelope.

Sentence 4: agbʉ̆n̄ abai (two antelopes) d'a ke a be nga agbʉ̆n̄.

Sentence 5: agbʉ̆n̄ ala (three antelopes) d'a ke a bʉ̆ agbʉ̆n̄ abai (two).

Sentence 6: agbʉ̆n̄ ani (four antelopes) d'a ke a bʉ̆ agbʉ̆n̄ ala (three).

Sentence 7: agbʉ̆n̄ atan (five antelopes) d'a ke a bʉ̆ agbʉ̆n̄ ani (four).

Sentence 8: agbʉ̆n̄ asʉ̄men (six antelopes) d'a ke a bʉ̆ agbʉ̆n̄ atan (five).

113 In the past Nzame lived a life which his children still live today,
113 proceeding westward as he abandoned villages in which he had lived with his wives and which he vacated after the fields had been exhausted. The number of his wives was so great that it was not known, and his villages were so important that at their sites the forest could not grow back, and this is why there are now plains in the midst of the forest in the Pahouin country.

Nzame arrived at the end of the earth, which is flat, and came up against the sky barring his way, an iron roof covering the earth as a roof covers a hut, and held up at its center by an invisible stake which [68] has since been held up by Ningone Maboere, sister of Nzame. He went to the other side of the sky after having crossed a very wide river, Endam, into which all the rivers empty and which flows all around the earth and under it, bursting through at the thinnest points so as to emerge in the form of springs. Then Nzame stopped and established the village Dzo, which he has not left since.

It is in this village that Nzame still lives with his wives and children. His life is the same as on earth, and there he welcomes the dead and keeps the elements imprisoned, the sun, moon, rain, etc...

113 Every morning, when Okwal the wild fowl calls, Nzame goes to
821 open the door of the hut where the sun sleeps. The sun wakes up, gets on its way, goes around the sky, and returns in the evening when everyone is in bed, to rest in the hut which it left in the morning. The sun is a large ball of fire which gives heat and light as it burns.

The moon also is imprisoned in the village Dzo. It is a large white stone which Nzame regularly shows to the people at night in different phases: small, larger, entirely round, then smaller and smaller, until he hides it for a few days. Because of its whiteness, the moon also gives light.

The rainbow is a big snake which is seen when Nzame gives it permission to go out and drink water from the river.

Sometimes Nzame also opens the door of another hut, and rain comes out, preceded by wind. Rain falls through holes pierced in the sky, which allow the lights of the Dzo village, or the shining eyes of the dead which look at the earth, to be seen at night. These luminous holes are the stars. Sometimes lightning comes out of the hut at the same time as the rain. The former is a little animal that falls on the trees and breaks them, making a noise. In the dry season the rain goes back to the hut, and it is seen at night or in the morning in the form of great white mists rising above the lakes and rivers.

Nzame has much work in his village, but he does not disdain to enjoy himself. He causes tomtom dances to be performed on the sky, and the noise of the dancers' feet is called thunder. From time to time also, when there is an eclipse, it is Nzame who takes pleasure in frightening people by plunging them into darkness at midday.

II. The evur. The evur or evus (plural, bivur) appears to be an individual spirit which plays a fundamental role in the life of the Pahouin. Not all persons have an evur. To have an evur, one must have received it from a person who has one. Such a person is called nem (plural, beyem). A child in the foetal state carried by its mother [69] can receive an evur even without the knowledge of the mother. One can tell by its weight that a newborn has an evur; only a nem, on lifting a child in his arms, can say that he has felt the weight of the evur, imperceptible to anyone else.

If at its birth a child has no evur, it can then receive one. The evur given it is either good (evur mve) or evil (evur abi).

(1) Good evur. In the case of a good evur, the donor of this evur, who is always an elder of the tribe, comes often to see the child until the latter can count to ten, that is to say, at about seven or eight years of age. At this time the child is considered intelligent enough to understand what is expected of him, and then the ceremony called akaga is performed.

All the beyem of the village are invited to meet at a tree called ovah (Didelotia africana), chosen from among all the others as the fetish tree because of its size, its longevity, and its resistance to tornadoes. The child is brought there; then the donor of the evur, in the presence of the assembled beyem, pronounces the wishes which he makes for the child's future. He wishes him wealth, strength, success, in general all that which will make him happy. For little girls the wishes are more particularly that they may later have many children, that they may be strong for their planting tasks, and that they may be esteemed by the other wives of their future husbands.

A kind of soup called nam akaga, the preparation of which is secret, is made on the occasion of this ceremony. Each time the donor of the evur makes a wish, the child must take a little nam. For example, if the wish is for him to have ten wives, this is made with the following words:

e mon ni, nam ma ke we wi olug bunega awum
That child, the soup I give you here marries ten wives,

772 water; dim • to terminate, to extinguish, to sink (in connection with
123 a star); dimi • to get lost; dip • to close; dibi • dark, opaque. (According to Trezenem, the world is surrounded by the river ɛ́ndam, a word related to ndam • width, wide.) The darkness of the east is black (cf. the name of the land of origin, mvɔ̂' ɛ́kanga • country of high white clouds; low dark rain clouds are minkut); the darkness of the west is white, the feminine color, white, moreover, being the color of mourning and death. The bekɔ̂n are white, at least those that remain on earth; those admitted to Zambe's village are red.

In relation to the east-west axis, north is on the right, mbo nnɔ̂m, male side, south is on the left, mbo ngal, female side. The dividing line between north and south is the Sanaga (Osɔ̂ɛ́ Nnanga • white river, river of the albinos) crossed by the python, mvɔ̂m, who is also the rainbow (though a Fang tradition in eastern Gabon mentions a river, the Evindi, that is, "black"). North is connected with red (1), the

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1. Evindi, ɛ́fumulu, and ɛ́vele, "black," "white," and "red," are the only names of colors in the language. They are applied to the near shades: a grey is "white" or "black," a blue or green is "black," ochre or light brown is "red," light yellow is "white," etc. For greater exactness, similes are used —nɔ'obon, "aquatic moss," for green, jɔ̂p, "sun," "egg yolk," for orange or yellow —or loan words like "blue."

masculine /115/ and festival color. South is also noon, midday, zane mos, and the zenith, yɔ̂be jɔ̂p (yɔ̂p • sky, high, height; jɔ̂p sun, in Fang, dzɔ̂); it is the side of light, vian, sunlight, or ɛ́fufup, brightness.

[821] The sky, yɔ̂p, seems to be supported by an iron post (akoñ • post or spear, a masculine symbol) held by the sister-wife of Zambe, Nyingon Mebe'e. The sky appears both masculine and feminine, like the earth; the sun is masculine, the moon feminine.

Thus we come to define two opposing directions or sectors on the compass card: the N/E quadrant is male; the S/W quadrant is female —the two others seem to be neuter. The NE-SW diameter bisects

779 from an elephant's tail. He then sprinkles the victim, the
782 ancestral skulls, and finally the totem.
783 Upon returning from battle, warriors wash their weapons in lustral water so as to ward off the malevolent spirits of the dead.

Lustral water is also used in sacrifices made in expiation of violations of éki.

Afterwards the water is emptied in a remote spot. The chief often carries it back to the village and uses it to water the
[124] tree, usually a fig tree, that was planted over the remains of his umbilical cord. This tree is an emblem of his own life, and the lustral water is in this case a sort of sacrifice. [509]

III. Fasting: nzè akhu

779 All important totemic ceremonies are preceded by fasts.
785 They are very strict, and the least infraction entails grave penalties.

They always take place in seclusion: those who are fasting are kept apart in the forest far from the village, shut up in small huts. During the fast it is strictly forbidden to drink or eat before sundown and to wash with water, although rubbing one's body with ashes is allowed. Furthermore, certain meats and fruits are prohibited, such as boiled food or fruit; fermented drinks, except on certain sacred days and before initiations, when, on the contrary, it is obligatory; and drinking from any kind of pot. If someone takes a drink inadvertently, the pot must be broken right away; nevertheless this act involves a ritual fault and requires expiation. One is supposed to drink from a brook, using
[134] a leaf rolled into a cone (oké ésaga). Finally, throughout the fast all intercourse with women is absolutely prohibited (évek).

779 The duration of the fast varies with the ceremony and the
785 initiation. For circumcision, for instance, it lasts usually a lunar month (ngon). Other initiations rarely exceed seven days,
● 821 let us say a lunar quarter, alôñ ngon; the last quarter is usually chosen (méte méngon). The moon plays an important role in all

totemic ceremonies, or in even just religious ones. None may be performed while the moon is dark or when it is full (ngon éto nduge: the moon is closed). In the ceremonies at which the chief performs alone, the fast lasts three and a half days, a half lunar quarter; the fast begins at nearly full moon (mɔ́lɔ́ ngon) and ends at full moon (nduge ngon).

IV. Totemic Dances: adzém ha dzém akhu

Dance plays such a large part in Fan life, as it does in that of every African, that it would be very unlikely to be absent from religious and totemic life. Besides, we know that dancing has always been associated with [510] religious phenomena among all peoples and in all epochs. David danced before the Ark of the Covenant; Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans had their sacred dances; and even in our day, in quite recent times, have we not seen in Madrid the seises, the altar boys of Seville, performing their graceful dances before the blessed sacrament?

The Fan have their religious dances, and special ones for each rite. We may divide them into several classes: purely religious dances, with which we are not concerned; those that accompany totemic rites; and, finally, purely totemic dances.

Among the dances accompanying totemic rites, the principal ones are dances of sacrifice and of circumcision and mortuary dances.

As the name indicates, dances of sacrifice accompany all sacrifices and are danced before and after, and each has it characteristic features.

The dance taking place before a sacrifice is serious. The chief, then all the participants, circle slowly around the victim to a tom-tom beating out a solemn rhythm. The movements of this dance are all slow and restrained, knees are bent slightly, elbows pushed back, with hands near the hips. It is more a rhythmic march than a true dance.

The dance taking place after a sacrifice is of quite another character. The rhythm is very fast, arms are raised into the air,

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does not usually last longer than eight days, a lunar quarter. Every evening songs and dances are performed in honor of the moon, which is looked upon as a source of fertility. (2) In Fan,

> 2. The same belief exists in almost all African tribes; just as in Egypt, the moon presides over rain, which is the earth's source of fertility and thus of human fertility.

the same word, ngon, denotes "girl" and "moon," an ambiguity to be found nearly everywhere among African tribes, in varying degrees. These songs and dances are very special and repetition [533] of them is strictly prohibited outside the sacred enclosure. (3)

> 3. All I could discover on the subject from my young Christian converts who had already gone through the ceremony was that these songs were "bad" and had as their purpose procreation. There is no doubt that the Fan say things "crudely" in their songs. That is all I can say.

According to Lang, (4) this is the time when a youth is

> 4. The Making of Religion, Art.: "Circumcision."

taught about the existence of a beneficent god, a defender of morals, who condemns egoism and adultery. This is so among the Fan. In fact, it is during their retreat the chief teaches the children the mébara, or wisdom of the ancestors, and narrates the great deeds of the race. This is as much as we have been able to learn, for the rule of secrecy is scrupulously observed. During the final days the chief makes a point of mixing into the

S: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

372 484 log from the last town where the caravan rested. This man kept the piece of wood burning by gently swinging it backward and forward, while marching along the path with his load. On one occasion I timed a native, and when we reached the next stopping place, after a three hours' tramp in the rain, the brand was still burning brightly, and it had been frequently passed from one end of the caravan to the other so that all who desired could light their pipes from it.

372 765 The Fang use fire in the ceremony *of going out of mourning*. I witnessed this ceremony once at Foulabifong. The widows of an old headman had put in the regular time of mourning and were now to be released. There were seven widows in all, three of middle age, and four young girls. A small fire of leaves had been lighted in the centre of the street, and on each side of the fire stood several young men armed with switches. The widows wore a very slender loin cloth. At a given signal the widows rushed toward the fire and bounded through it, the young men switching them as they passed, but the switches were not used severely. Immediately after the switching, each widow seated herself on the ground holding a bunch of burning leaves under her feet, while a young man shaved their heads with a sharp trade knife. On inquiry regarding this ceremony, I obtained the [789] following information: Passing the fire *cleans* them after mourning (evidently considered a means of purification). Switching reminds the widows of their duty to the man who inherits them as his wives. Burning has two meanings: firstly, the pain caused is endured as a last act of mourning for the departed; second, it signifies that henceforth the widows walk a new path (enter upon a new life).

372 521 Fire has a place in Fang religion or belief. The sun is considered the *tata* (father) of all heat, and the original maker of all fire, whether by friction, matches, powder, or lightning. When a severe thunderstorm is at its height, the natives say of the lightning, "that the sun has hid his face and is shooting fire, because he is angry." The native word for sun is *fo*. Although the palaver house fire is kept burning, still, no special effort is made to keep it alight; should it go out, any person present is at liberty to rekindle it from newly produced fire.

VII.—*Customs.*

671 The Fang have no system of law, no judge or tribunal for punishment of crime. Theft, murder, offences against the person are all settled according to native custom.

628 681 Example: A Fang of the Esisis clan steals goods or a woman from a Fang of the Nge clan. The Nge who has been wronged does not go to the offender for settlement, he goes to another near town and shoots the first goat he sees in the street or if very angry, he may shoot a woman. The owner of the goat or woman demands of the Nge his reason for doing so. The Nge replies, "An Esisis" (giving the man's name) "has wronged me; I put the palaver (his offence) on you." The third party then goes to the Esisis and says, "An Nge" (giving the man's name) "has shot my goat (or woman) because you have made trouble with him; he has put your palaver (trouble) on me. You must pay me!" The original offender is